

Pat Daugherty's work in the community goes well beyond being a restaurateur. For more of his years he was a pillar of the community, a mentor, and an avid supporter of Penn State University and the greater Centre region. Most of all, Pat was someone who everyone called a friend.

I extend my sincere condolences to Pat's wife Ruth, his children, Sam and Dawn, and his family and friends. Pat will be so truly missed, and his legacy will live on forever.

KEEP YOUR PROMISE TO CALDOR FIRE VICTIMS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, the Caldor fire raged in the Sierra Nevada of California for 68 days last summer, consuming more than 221,000 acres of forestland, making it the 15th largest and the 16th most destructive fire in the history of California.

It literally wiped out the Gold Rush-era town of Grizzly Flats, and for days threatened the city of Lake Tahoe. It destroyed nearly 800 homes, leaving hundreds of families homeless and destitute.

On September 13, President Biden visited the scene. On that occasion, officials from El Dorado County and the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services apprised him of the need to assist these displaced families. He said, "We're going to take care of them. There's a lot we can do, and it starts off being a Federal responsibility, in my view."

The President was absolutely correct in that assessment. The fire exploded in the El Dorado National Forest that was catastrophically overgrown due to Federal environmental laws that have made removal of excess timber all but impossible.

According to local officials I have spoken with, the excessive use of backfires by the Forest Service also appears to have needlessly exacerbated the fire. This fire is indeed a Federal responsibility, and the Federal government owes to every one of the fire's victims the full resources available to get them back on their feet.

And yet, despite multiple appeals, the Federal Emergency Management Agency has refused to approve individual assistance for the victims of the Caldor fire.

The FEMA denial is a stunning double standard when compared with assistance granted in other fires that did far less damage. For example, the California Office of Emergency Services identified nine other individual assistance grants that FEMA approved in 2021 for fires that cumulatively destroyed fewer homes than those destroyed by the Caldor fire alone.

Survivors hoping to rebuild their homes face an insurance deficit of \$200,000 or more. Many survivors are

uninsured, and nearly all of them are underinsured due to the severity of recent wildfire seasons. Some survivors who were able to remain on their properties still lack access to potable water.

Moreover, residents of Grizzly Flats—the town completely wiped out by the fire—are disproportionately low-income, elderly, and socioeconomically vulnerable. Their homes and their belongings were all they had, and now they have nothing.

Even those who did not lose their businesses to the fire lost many months of income as evacuations shut everything down. The regional economy will continue to suffer if survivors are not able to rebuild. Critical infrastructure has been either damaged or completely destroyed, including schools, fire stations, and the Grizzly Flats Post Office.

While local officials, residents, and organizations are doing everything they can to provide support to one another and to rebuild, they will not be able to recover without the Federal assistance that they desperately need and deserve.

Last year, FEMA denied the request for individual assistance for the Creek fire in Fresno and Madera counties. When I appealed to President Trump to correct this injustice, he immediately reversed FEMA's decision and granted individual assistance to these homeowners.

President Biden made a solemn promise to the victims of the Caldor fire to help them rebuild. He personally saw the damage and heartbreak caused by the fire. He has the authority to reverse FEMA's denial and fulfill his promise. I have now written three letters to him drawing this to his attention and making this request. So far, I have not even received the courtesy of a response.

"We're going to take care of them, and there's a lot we can do." Those were the President's words spoken to these families in September. These families have now passed their first Thanksgiving without their homes and many without their livelihoods that were taken from them by this Federal fire. They are approaching a dismal Christmas, waiting and praying for the President to fulfill his promise.

I appeal to the President to use his authority to keep his promise to the victims of the Caldor fire. As President Trump did for the victims of the Creek fire, I call upon him to reverse FEMA's outrageous decision and release the funds these families are depending upon to rebuild their lives and their communities.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 10 a.m. today.

Accordingly (at 8 o'clock and 10 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

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AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at 10 a.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Margaret Grun Kibben, offered the following prayer:

Just and merciful God, You have promised to open Your gates that the righteous nation that keeps the faith may enter in.

Lord, we confess our unrighteousness and our faithlessness both as a country and as individuals. Show us the paths of right behavior and restore our faith in You.

Gracious God, You give peace to those whose minds remain fixed on You, whose trust in You gives them certainty in all life's challenges.

Lord, we confess that we have lost our sense of purpose and our ability to trust anything or anyone, even You. Show us the way You would have us go and restore our confidence in Your desire as You guide our lives.

Eternal God, You are our rock and our redeemer.

Lord, we confess that we fail to lean on You and instead depend solely on our own feeble abilities. Show us the strength of Your steadfast love and restore to us the promise of Your salvation, that we may enter into Your gates with praise and thanksgiving.

In Your saving name we pray.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to section 11(a) of House Resolution 188, the Journal of the last day's proceedings is approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTCH) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. DEUTCH led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

GUN VIOLENCE

(Mr. DEUTCH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DEUTCH. Madam Speaker, as we begin to hear stories of the victims,